

# CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN



The Department of Community Development  
City of Huntsville Alabama

**CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN FOR  
THE CITY OF HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

The City Council of the City of Huntsville, Alabama, in an effort to more fully involve its citizens on a direct and continuing basis, has developed the Citizen Participation Plan. The U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires jurisdictions that receive its funds to adopt a Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) that sets forth the jurisdiction's policies and procedures for citizen participation (24 CFR 91.105). The City of Huntsville's CPP speaks specifically to activities and funds that the Community Development Department is responsible for administering. These grants/funds include, but are not limited to, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Home Investment Partnership Programs (HOME) funds, and all other HUD funds received by the City of Huntsville; all State of Alabama funds, include but not limited to Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds, and any other Federal or State funds administered by the City of Huntsville, Alabama's Community Development Department.

Annual entitlement grants are made to the City from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the purpose of addressing the needs of its citizens, specifically the city's low to moderate income residents. Through this Plan, citizens' involvement in the planning, and evaluation of, all Federal fund, CDBG, HOME, all other HUD funded activities, and all State of Alabama funded activities, administered by the Community Development Department, are administered through an open process in which the rights of Huntsville citizens are respected. Citizens are encouraged to participate in influencing decisions and obtaining support from local government officials on issues of community development matters.

The City of Huntsville desires and encourages the participation of all the citizens of the City of Huntsville, particularly low to moderate income residents of blighted areas, low to moderate income residents of areas in which Federal and HUD funds, including, but not limited to, CDBG and HOME funds, and all State of Alabama funds, are proposed to be used, and by residents of all low to moderate income neighborhoods that at any given time are defined by the City (Target Areas).

**II. ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND RECORDS**

The City, through its Community Development Department, offers citizens access to information and records relating to the City's proposed and actual use of all Federal and HUD funds, including, but not limited to, CDBG and HOME funds, and all State of Alabama funds. The City will make available to citizens, records regarding the past use of funds, the Citizen Participation Plan, the Consolidated Plan, the annual Action Plan, Substantial Amendments to the Consolidated Plan, Action Plan, and the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). These records will be available to the public during regular working hours at the City of Huntsville's Community Development Department, located at 120 Holmes Street, East, Huntsville, Alabama, 35801. These records will be available for five years. If a citizen requires records outside of the five year window, a written request should be submitted to the Director.

All public notices, announcement of Plans, and amendments will be in English and Spanish. The City will also provide notices, announcements, and amendments in other languages if requested. Upon request,

translations and some interpretation services will be contracted through Alamex Translation Services, LLC or Ortiz Consulting & Educational Services. The City of Huntsville's Citizen Advisory Board consist of one Spanish speaking member who is dedicated to aiding and providing translation/interpretation services to the identified population. Additional literature and materials will include a statement in Spanish indicating availability in Spanish upon request. If other populations of LEP residents are identified, the City will take appropriate measures to serve the language access needs of those persons.

Upon request the City will provide accommodations for hearing-impaired and sight-impaired citizens for community meetings or public hearings. Upon request the City will format written documents for persons with disabilities. These citizens will need to request needed adaptations one week in advance of meeting in order for the City to make arrangements. Hearing or speech impaired residents are encouraged to use the TTY line at (256) 427-7092 for request. The City will also seek to have all on-line documents in a format that is compatible with web readers who are visually impaired.

The City's website will also include a Spanish language message directing LEP citizens to contact the Office of Community Development for additional information on available programs, projects, and vital documents.

### III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

The City will hold at least two public hearing to obtain the views of citizens, and to respond to proposals and questions on the City's housing and community development needs. These hearings will be held early in the planning process to allow citizens and community and neighborhood organizations an opportunity to make recommendations and comments on plan preparation. Notification of meetings related to the Consolidated Plan and the annual Action Plan will be made two weeks (14 days) before the public hearing date. These hearings will be held at a time and location convenient to potential or actual beneficiaries, with full accommodations for the handicapped. Official notice will be published in *The Huntsville Times*, and placed on the City of Huntsville's website located at <http://www.huntsvilleal.gov>. All public hearing locations will be wheelchair accessible and accommodations for sign interpretive services, and non-English speaking residents will be made available if requested one week in advance of meeting (See Exhibit A-Language Access Plan for Limited English Proficiency Person). Public Hearing notices will also be placed at the following locations:

City of Huntsville Community Development 120 E. Holmes Ave Huntsville, AL 35801	Richard Showers Center 4600 Blue Spring Road Huntsville, AL 35801	Huntsville-Madison County Public Library 915 Monroe Street Huntsville, AL 35801
Alabama Institute for Deaf & Blind 600 St Clair Ave SW # 2 Huntsville, AL 35801	Huntsville Housing Authority 200 Washington St NE Huntsville, AL 35801	North Alabama Coalition for the Homeless 4092 South Memorial Parkway, Suite 205 Huntsville, AL 35802

### IV. PARTICIPATION

It is the intent of the City to attempt to reach every resident of the City and provide access to all aspects of the Federal or State funds administered by the City of Huntsville, Alabama's Community Development Department. This access includes the opportunity to apply for CDBG, HOME, and ESG, funded programs, to comment on how the funds should be spent in upcoming years, to comment on the City's past and current performance in carrying out CDBG, HOME, and ESG, funded projects, and to comment on drafts

of reports such as the Five Year Consolidated Plan, the Annual Action Plan, and the Consolidated Annual Performance Report (CAPER).

The City emphasizes the involvement of low to moderate income residents in areas where housing and community development funds may be spent. The City also encourages participation of persons with special needs and/or persons who are often underrepresented in the public process, including minorities, non-English speaking/Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons, persons with disabilities, and persons who are or are at risk of becoming homeless. The City encourages the participation of Public Housing Authority leadership and their residents, as well as other subsidized/affordable housing residents, in the development of the Consolidated Plan.

In order to encourage participation of the identified population, the following methods to involve them in the planning process as appropriate includes but not limited to:

- Focus Groups
- Hearings
- Mailings
- Internet Surveys
- Internet Postings
- Newsletters
- Newspaper Advertisements, and
- Press Releases

If written notice is given at least seven days before a public meeting or hearing date, the City will provide appropriate materials, equipment and interpreting services to facilitate the participation of non-English speaking persons and persons with visual and/or hearing impairments. Interpreters will be provided at public hearings where a significant number of non-English speaking residents can be reasonably expected to participate. Finally, the City will inform and offer opportunities for comment to all residents falling within the scope of the Consolidated Plan.

The City will provide accommodations for non-English speaking/LEP citizens that attend public meetings or hearings. Residents requiring special accommodations will need to request such accommodations one week in advance of meeting. Translation services for community meetings, public hearings, and/or written documents will have to be requested one week in advance of meeting. The City will provide accommodations for hearing-impaired and sight-impaired citizens that attend community meetings or public hearings or the request of written documents formatted for persons with disabilities. These citizens will need to request needed adaptations one week in advance of scheduled meetings in order for the City to make arrangements. Hearing or speech impaired residents are encouraged to use the TTY line at (256) 427-7092 for making such request. The City will also seek to have all on-line documents in a format that is compatible with web readers who are visually impaired.

## **V. PUBLICATION OF THE CONSOLIDATE & ANNUAL PLAN**

The Consolidated Plan will be published and made available at the Huntsville-Madison County Public Library, located at 915 Monroe Street, Huntsville, AL 35801 and also on the City's website located at <http://www.huntsvilleal.gov>. In an abbreviated form, the Executive Summary will describe the contents

and purpose of the Consolidated Plan/Action Plan as well as identifying where an entire copy of the Consolidated Plan/Action Plan may be reviewed or copies personally obtained, as well as how to receive a copy by mail. Prior to the submission of the Consolidated Plan or Action Plan, the City will publish, in *The Huntsville Times*, and on the City's website. The proposed statement of community development activities and projected use of funds for that Program Year affords citizens an opportunity to examine the Consolidated Plan or Action Plan contents so that they can provide comments on the proposed Plan and on the City's Community Development Department's performance. Said publication will also include:

1. The estimated amount of all Federal and HUD funds, including, but not limited to CDBG and HOME funds, and all State of Alabama funds, proposed to be used for activities that will benefit low and moderate income persons;
2. The Consolidated Plan will include an Action Plan for the first program year of the Five Year Consolidated Plan. Each year thereafter, a one-year Annual Action Plan will be made available to the public. The Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) will be completed following each program year. The Annual Action Plan and CAPER will be made available to the public for each program year in which the Consolidated Plan is in effect. In compliance with HUD regulations, the Consolidated Plan and Action Plan will have a 30-day comment period, and the CAPER will have a 15-day comment period. All Substantial Amendments to the Consolidated Plan/Action Plan will have a 30-day comment period. Public comment periods associated with all other Federal and State funds will follow the prescribed regulatory comment periods associated with their specific legislation.

The City's Consolidated/Action Plan will also be available to the public at the following locations:

City of Huntsville Community Development 120 E. Holmes Ave Huntsville, AL 35801	Richard Showers Center 4600 Blue Spring Road Huntsville, AL 35801	Huntsville-Madison County Public Library 915 Monroe Street Huntsville, AL 35801
Alabama Institute for Deaf & Blind 600 St Clair Ave SW # 2 Huntsville, AL 35801	Huntsville Housing Authority 200 Washington St NE Huntsville, AL 35801	North Alabama Coalition for the Homeless 4092 South Memorial Parkway, Suite 205 Huntsville, AL 35802

The information will be made available in a format accessible to all persons, to include persons with disabilities upon request to the:

Department of Community Development  
120 E. Holmes Ave.  
Huntsville, AL 35801  
Tel: (256) 427-5400  
Fax: (256) 427-5431  
TTY: (256) 427-7092  
<http://www.huntsvilleal.gov/comdev/index.php>

## **VI. ANTI-DISPLACEMENT**

As part of the implementation steps of the Consolidated Plan, the City will review all projects recommended for funding to identify those activities that will result in the displacement of residents. The City of Huntsville will comply with all requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance Act. This act, passed by Congress in 1970, is a federal law that establishes minimum standards for federally funded programs and projects that require the acquisition of real property (real estate) or displaced persons from their homes, businesses, or farms. The Uniform Act's protections and assistance apply to the acquisition, rehabilitation, or demolition of real property for federal or federally funded projects. The City of Huntsville will take the needed steps to assure that the objectives of the URA are achieved where displacement activities are required. The Uniform Relocation Act objectives are:

- To provide uniform, fair and equitable treatment of persons whose real property is acquired or who are displaced in connection with federally funded projects
- To ensure relocation assistance is provided to displaced persons to lessen the emotional and financial impact of displacement
- To ensure that no individual or family is displaced unless decent, safe, and sanitary (DSS) housing is available within the displaced person's financial means
- To help improve the housing conditions of displaced persons living in substandard housing, and
- To encourage and expedite acquisition by agreement and without coercion.

Projects that the City deems beneficial but that may cause displacement may be recommended and approved for funding only if the City or its sub-grantees demonstrate that such displacement is necessary and vital to the community and that they take efforts to reduce the number of persons displaced. Further, the projects goals and anticipated accomplishments clearly outweigh the adverse effects of displacement imposed on persons who must relocate.

Consistent with the goals and objectives of HUD entitlement programs, the City of Huntsville will take all reasonable steps necessary to minimize displacement of persons. If displacement occurs, the City will provide relocation assistance to all persons directly, involuntarily, and permanently displaced according to HUD regulations.

The owner-occupants or tenants are eligible for actual reasonable cost (based on fair market rent) of temporary lodging facilities until relocated or the structure is determined habitable by Community Development's housing inspector;

The City of Huntsville must approve housing and the Lessor and Lessee must sign a rent agreement before move-in. Housing must be comparable functionally to the displacement dwelling and decent, safe, and sanitary. The term "functionally equivalent" means that it performs the same function, has the same principal features present, and can contribute to a comparable style of living. Approved lodging accommodations include apartments and houses. The City of Huntsville will not reimburse "rental expenses" for living with a friend or family member;

- Either The City of Huntsville will provide the owner-occupants or tenants direct payment for moving expenses (to and from temporary housing) and storage costs, or the City will arrange

moving and storage of furniture with a moving company. If the City makes a direct payment, complete documentation and receipts are necessary to process claims when storage costs exceed the amount assumed by the direct payment;

- The City may pay the cost of relocation assistance from Federal funds or funds available from other sources.

## **VII. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

The City will provide technical advisory assistance to groups which are representative of low and moderate income persons that request assistance in developing proposals. The City will also provide technical assistance to neighborhood citizen committees, neighborhood advisory committees, civic groups, and individual citizens in understanding the CDBG program requirements, policies, and regulations governing the CDBG Entitlement program. The City will also provide technical assistance to these same groups on any other Federal or State funded programs administered by the Community Development Department.

## **VIII. SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENTS**

The City of Huntsville will amend its Consolidated Plan and or Action Plan whenever it decides not to carry out an activity described in the Consolidated Plan and or Action Plan, or decides to carry out an activity not previously described, or decides to substantially change the purpose, scope, location, beneficiaries, or budgeted dollar amount of an activity. Any new project or change to existing activities over \$350,000.00, or as noted above, any changes in the purpose, scope, location and beneficiaries, will constitute a substantial amendment.

Prior to amending its Consolidated Plan and or Action Plan, the City will provide citizens with reasonable notice of, and an opportunity to comment on such proposed amendments, by publication in *The Huntsville Times*, and on the City's website, at least 30 days prior to amendment by the City. The City will make available to the public, and will submit to HUD, or any other applicable agency, a description of amendments adopted.

## **IX. PERFORMANCE REPORT**

Citizens will be given a comment period of 15 days to provide input on the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). Comments may be submitted to the staff member identified under the "Complaint Procedures" section of this Citizen Participation Plan.

This Citizen Participation Plan shall apply to all Federal and HUD funds, including, but not limited to, Community Development Block Grant and HOME Partnership Act Entitlement activities, and State of Alabama funded activities, that are on-going as of the adoption of said Plan, as well as all future activities.

This Plan shall remain in effect from its adoption date, and until all activities assisted by any and all funds listed above. Including, but not limited to the CDBG and HOME Partnership Act Entitlement programs are completed, or until it is superseded by a new or amended Citizen Participation Plan.

## **X. COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

Any citizen or group of citizens, with specific complaints, regarding any part of the implementation of any Federal or State funded programs administered by the Community Development Department has the right to submit a written complaint through specified channels. Written complaints will be responded to in writing within 15 working days from the data received by the Community Development Department.

- 1.) Any person or group that is aggrieved by an action or proposal related to activities involving Federal, HUD, or State funded activities administered by the Community Development Department, shall first make their complaint known to the Community Development Department. Written complaints should be submitted to:

Michelle Gilliam Jordan, AICP  
Community Development Director  
City of Huntsville  
308 Fountain Circle  
Huntsville, AL 35801  
(256) 427-5100

- 2.) If the aggrieved person or group does not obtain satisfactory results from written complaint to the Department Head, then an appeal may be made to the local governing body through the Office of the Mayor:

Tommy Battle, Mayor  
City of Huntsville  
P. O. Box 308  
Huntsville, Alabama 35804  
(256) 427-5000

- 3.) If the aggrieved person or group desires to carry a complaint forward from the local governing body they may contact:

U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
Birmingham Office  
Region IV  
Medical Forum Building, Suite 900  
950 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, North  
Birmingham, Alabama 35203-5301  
(205) 745-4340  
Attn: Charles Franklin, Community Planning and Development Director



EXHIBIT  
"A"  
CITY OF HUNTSVILLE  
LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN FOR LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY PERSONS

Follows on Next Page

# FOUR-FACTOR ANALYSIS

AND

## LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN FOR LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY PERSONS



**The Department of Community Development  
City of Huntsville Alabama**

In compliance with Executive Order 13166, the City of Huntsville, Department of Community Development has developed the following Language Access Plan (LAP) for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons. Persons who, as a result of national origin, do not speak English as their primary language and who have limited ability to speak, read, write, or understand English may be entitled to language assistance under Title VI in order to receive a particular service, benefit, or encounter. The City of Huntsville performed the following analysis:

**I. The City of Huntsville, Department of Community Development's Four-Factor Analysis**

The following Four-Factor Analysis will serve as the guide for determining language assistance measures for LEP persons that the City of Huntsville, Department of Community Development will undertake to guarantee access to information on all federal funds administered by the City of Huntsville Department of Community Development. Reasonable step will be taken to ensure meaningful access to programs and activities by LEP persons. The four factors include:

1. Number or proportion of LEP persons served or encountered in the eligible service population (served or encountered includes those persons who would be served by the recipient if the person received education and outreach and the recipient provided sufficient language services).

According to the Census Bureau's 2009-2013 American Community Survey (5-Year Estimates), Table DP02: Selected Social Characteristics, 5,723 persons, or 3.3% of Huntsville's population, spoke English less than "very well." In all of Madison County, 8,442 people or 2.7 percent of the total population (5 years and over) speak English less than "very well." Based on this data, Madison County meets the 1,000 or 5% LEP person threshold of persons that do not speak English or do not speak English well. The identified LEP persons are Spanish speaking person. Currently, there are no other languages that meet the threshold.

2. The frequency with which the LEP persons come into contact with the program.

The City of Huntsville Community Development staff has reviewed the past frequency with which it has come in contact with LEP persons. To date, Community Development staff has had no requests for interpreters and no requests for translated documents. The Community Development staff has had very little to no contact with LEP persons at public meetings or hearings concerning programs, activities or the planning process.

3. The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the program.

There is a significant LEP population in Madison County with the largest concentration being in the City of Huntsville. The City of Huntsville Community Development provides a number of services that have the possibility of placing staff or board members in contact with LEP persons. The most important service that the City of Huntsville Department of Community Development provides that could bring the City into contact with LEP persons is the public involvement process for community planning. The City of Huntsville, Department of Community Development will continually work to increase the visibility and availability of interpretation services, coordinate the provision of LEP services within the City, manage and document translations, interact with other involved community agencies and monitor program success.

4. The resources available and costs to the recipient.

Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) website can be utilized to translate some written materials. Many of the common forms used in the implementation of projects are available in multiple languages on the HUD and DOL websites. Additionally, the City will provide accommodations for non-English speaking/LEP citizens in case of public meetings or hearings. Residents requiring special accommodations will need to request such accommodations one week in advance of meeting. Please contact the City's Community Development Division one week in advance of meeting if you would like to request special accommodation for community meetings, public hearings, and/or written documents.

## **II. Language Access Plan**

As a result of the preceding Four-Factor Analysis, the City of Huntsville, Department of Community Development will strive to increase the visibility and availability of interpretation services, coordinate the provision of LEP services within the City, manage and document translations, interact with other involved community agencies and monitor program success. Community Development staff will act as liaison and record keepers in order to provide support to any other involved City office for the facilitation of LEP customer interaction. Community Development will offer all public notices, announcement of Plans, and amendments in Spanish. Upon request, translations and some interpretation services will be contracted through Alamex Translation Services, LLC or Ortiz Consulting & Educational Services. The City of Huntsville's Citizen Advisory Board consist of one Spanish speaking member (Rosa M. Toussaint-Ortiz) who is dedicated to aiding and providing translation/interpretation services to the identified population. Additional literature and materials will include a statement in Spanish indicating availability in Spanish upon request. If other populations of LEP residents are identified, the City will take appropriate measures to serve the language access needs of those persons.

Upon request the City will provide accommodations for hearing-impaired and sight-impaired citizens for community meetings or public hearings. Upon request the City will format written documents for persons that are sight and hearing impaired. These citizens will need to request needed adaptations one week in advance of meeting in order for the City to make arrangements. Hearing or speech impaired residents are encouraged to use the TTY line at (256) 427-7092 for request. The City will also seek to have all on-line documents in a format that is compatible with web readers who are visually impaired.

The City's website will also include a Spanish language message directing LEP citizens to contact the Office of Community Development for additional information on available programs, projects, and vital documents.

## **III. Availability and Access**

The City's LAP Plan is available to the public on-line at <http://www.huntsvilleal.gov/comdev/index.php> and at the following locations:

City of Huntsville  
Community Development  
120 E. Holmes Ave.  
Huntsville, AL 35801

Richard Showers Center  
4600 Blue Spring Road  
Huntsville, AL 35801

Huntsville-Madison County Public Library  
915 Monroe Street  
Huntsville, AL 35801

Alabama Institute for Deaf & Blind  
(AIDB)  
600 St Clair Ave SW # 2  
Huntsville, AL 35801

Huntsville Housing  
Authority  
200 Washington St NE  
Huntsville, AL 35801

North Alabama Coalition for the Homeless  
(NACH)  
4092 South Memorial Parkway, Suite 205  
Huntsville, AL 35802

The information will be made available in a format accessible to all persons, to include persons with disabilities upon request to the:

Department of Community Development  
120 E. Holmes Ave.  
Huntsville, AL 35801  
Tel: (256) 427-5400  
Fax: (256) 427-5431  
TTY: (256) 427-7092  
<http://www.huntsvilleal.gov/comdev/index.php>

All public notices, announcement of Plans, and amendments will be in English and Spanish. The City will also provide notices, announcements, and amendments in other languages if requested. Upon request, translations and some interpretation services will be contracted through Alamex Translation Services, LLC or Ortiz Consulting & Educational Services. The City of Huntsville's Citizen Advisory Board consist of one Spanish speaking member who is dedicated to aiding and providing translation/interpretation services to the identified population. Additional literature and materials will include a statement in Spanish indicating availability in Spanish upon request. If other populations of LEP residents are identified, the City will take appropriate measures to serve the language access needs of those persons.

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The City's website will also include a Spanish language message directing LEP citizens to contact the Office of Community Development for additional information on available programs, projects, and vital documents.

#### **IV. Complaint Procedure**

Any citizen or group of citizens, with specific complaints, regarding any part of the implementation of any Federal or State funded programs administered by the Community Development Department has the right to submit a written complaint through specified channels. Written complaints will be

responded to in writing within 15 working days from the date received by the Community Development Department.

- 1) Any person or group that is aggrieved by an action or proposal related to activities involving Federal, HUD, or State funded activities administered by the Community Development Department, shall first make their complaint known to the Community Development Department. Written complaints should be submitted to:

Michelle Gilliam Jordan, AICP  
Planning Director  
City of Huntsville  
308 Fountain Circle  
Huntsville, AL 35801  
(256) 427-5100

- 2) If the aggrieved person or group does not obtain satisfactory results from written complaint to the Director, then an appeal may be made to the local governing body through the:

Office of the Mayor:  
Tommy Battle, Mayor  
City of Huntsville  
P. O. Box 308  
Huntsville, Alabama 35804  
(256) 427-5000

- 3) If the aggrieved person or group desires to carry a complaint forward from the local governing body they may contact:

U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
Birmingham Office  
Region IV  
Medical Forum Building, Suite 900  
950 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, North  
Birmingham, Alabama 35203-5301  
(205) 745-4340  
Attn: Charles Franklin, Community Planning and Development Director